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March 20, 2017

Dear Esteemed Representatives of the House Education Committee:

I am pleased to write this letter of support for Representative VanderWall's proposed House Bill 4316. Furthermore, I would also like to voice our support for House Bills 4315 through 4318 because I believe that these bills help our students choose the college/career pathway that they desire.

As you know, Rep. VanderWall's bill will eliminate the "sunset" on the foreign language requirement and that makes sense. This rule has helped our students take more electives (to include CTE opportunities) and we would like to see it continue. I have yet to hear an area manufacturer tell me that they want kids with more foreign language, math or science. I typically hear that we want individuals who have a good set of soft skills (i.e. arrive at work on time, use common sense, be drug free, etc...) as well as a background in Welding, Electronics, Computer Networking, etc... The current flexibility allows students to attend our Career Tech Center and learn these skills instead of remaining in their local districts to take Spanish, German, etc....

Also, the flexibility to the MMC found in HB 4315-4318 will continue to help us meet our students' needs. I know that you are in a tough position with the group that believes 4 year college degrees are what everyone needs, but that is not the truth in Manistee County. Our students have access to several Early College programs, but only a small percentage of students apply for those programs, so these bills would help the majority of students that we serve.

If you have any questions, please contact me,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Jennette", is located below the text "If you have any questions, please contact me,".

Jeff Jennette
Superintendent